

WHAT IS A RURAL EMERGENCY HOSPITAL?

The **Rural Emergency Hospital** is a federal provider type that gives small rural hospitals support to maintain critical services that would otherwise be at risk of closure in their communities.

This new designation is available for Critical Access Hospitals and rural hospitals with 50 or fewer certified beds as of December 27, 2020.

More than **50 rural hospitals** across **22 states** have converted to rural emergency hospital status, but this option is **not currently available in Pennsylvania**.

Rural Emergency Hospitals keep care close by:



24/7 emergency services



Lab and pharmacy services for treatment and diagnosis



Strict CMS standards for quality, infection prevention, patient safety



Transfer agreements with area trauma centers

How it Works: Rural Emergency Hospitals

In 2023, the federal government created a new provider type—the Rural Emergency Hospital—as a pathway to help rural hospitals avoid closure:

- **Financial Support:** Enhanced federal payments and recurring revenue
- **Regulatory Relief:** Flexibility in staffing and services to meet community needs
- **Ultimate Goal:** Lifesaving support for small hospitals at risk of total closure, keeping essential services and clinicians in rural communities

Why it Matters

Rural health care is at risk. Since 2005, six Pennsylvania rural hospitals have closed and nearly 200 others have shuttered across the nation.

Call to Action

HAP urges your support for legislation that would allow rural hospitals on the brink of closure to keep care in their communities.